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Department of State
Operations Center

(GUYANA TASK FORCE)

Situation Report No. 19

Situation in Guayana as of 1800 hours (EST), November 24, 1978

There are close to 800 dead from the Jonestown calamity, according to the latest count. Embassy Georgetown reported at 1100 EST that in addition to the 485 bodies that have already been taken from the settlement, and another 20 that had been prepared for shipment, there remained at least 270 other bodies. All bodies still in Guyana will be brought to Dover AFB. Two C-141's departed from Georgetown today with a total of 152 bodies. They are due to arrive in Dover at 1930 and 2050 EST. This will bring the total number of bodies at Dover to 422.

The search for members of the settlement who might have fled continues, although we now estimate that the possible number is quite small, perhaps none. Since Tuesday the Guyanese Defense Force has been using a battalion-size force (300 to 400 men) to conduct ground searches along jungle trails in the region. All trails out of Jamestown have been searched and the inhabitants along them have been questioned. US aircraft have been since Tuesday reconnoitering the area surrounding Jonestown, using bull horns to call any People's Temple members who might be in the bush. Today two US officers reconnoitered the trails leading to Venezuela by helicopter and another officer led a patrol through the jungle on a route bearing 325° from Jonestown, thus following the discovered escape plan of the People's Temple.

The Guyanese Government informed Embassy Georgetown that it will not be possible for the PT members in Georgetown to return to the United States for at least another 48 hours. We still await the Government's

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response to our request that they reverse their decision not to allow an FBI team into the country.

Deputy Prime Minister Ptolomy Reid made a brief, factual statement to Parliament today on the murder of Congressman Ryan and the Jonestown occurance. Shortly before he spoke, our Embassy advised him of the latest count. Reid explained that the Government had decided to lease the tract to the People's Temple because of the group's apparent interest in agriculture and social service. Reid also said that charges of murder would be brought against the prime suspect in the death of Sharon Amos and her children, although he did not identify this individual. Parliament will debate the Jonestown occurance at a later date.

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